

MANAGE Internship: Cultivating Experiences for Future Professionals



“From Campus to Corridor of Change: My First Step into MANAGE”

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 [Anukul Chandra](#)

The moment I stepped onto the campus of MANAGE, Hyderabad, a surge of purpose swept over me. This wasn't just another internship, it was the turning point I had long envisioned. As a passionate M.Sc. student in Agricultural Extension Education, I had always believed that true learning begins beyond textbooks. MANAGE stood before me not just as an institute, but as a gateway where academic theories meet real-world application and innovation.



The grandeur of the campus, the intellectual energy, and the welcoming environment immediately made me feel I was part of something significant. The iconic gates of MANAGE were not just entry points; they marked the beginning of a journey that would challenge, inspire, and transform me.



I still remember my very first session, Dr. Saravanan Raj, Director of Agricultural Extension at MANAGE, addressed us with words that ignited a spark: *"You're not just interns. You are the future professionals of Indian agriculture."* His words weren't just motivational, they were a mission statement. His clarity of thought, vision for inclusive rural development, and dedication to youth empowerment made me realize that this internship wasn't merely about gaining experience, it was about becoming part of a larger cause.

Pre-Internship Expectations

Why did I apply? Because I have always been passionate about agri-innovation, stakeholder collaboration, and rural transformation. I had read about MANAGE's stellar reputation in capacity building and policy advocacy, but I wanted to live it. I wanted to understand how this premier institution crafts strategies, builds leaders, and influences systems. My goal was simple yet powerful: to bridge the gap between what I had learned in theory and what the world of extension truly needs. MANAGE offered that platform, a perfect blend of research intensity, field relevance, and mentorship. As I stepped into the institute's corridors, I knew I was not just entering an internship, I was stepping into a transformation.

"Expectation Meets Elevation: My First Leap into Learning at MANAGE"

Before joining MANAGE, I had envisioned an internship filled with research exposure, national-level policy discussions, and expert mentorship. I expected a structured, intellectually rich environment where innovation was encouraged and learning was hands-on. What I hadn't anticipated was just how interactive, fulfilling, and transformative the experience would be.

Learning Environment

The learning environment at MANAGE was nothing short of electric. From day one, I was surrounded by fellow interns from across India, each bringing unique ideas, academic disciplines, and regional insights. This diversity fostered a culture of collaborative learning and cross-cultural exchange, enriching every conversation. The air buzzed with brainstorming sessions and group activities, not just academic in nature, but deeply rooted in the real-world challenges of Indian agriculture. The tasks assigned during the internship were far from routine, they pushed me beyond theory and into practical problem-solving.

Internship Experience

I contributed to compiling data on stakeholder engagement, analyzing various agricultural extension models, and developing presentation materials for national-level programs. These experiences deepened my understanding of the three core pillars of agricultural extension; policy, practice, and people, and how they interconnect to drive sustainable change.



A major highlight of my internship was working on my research titled, "*Connecting the Dots to Make the Future: Sustainability and Scalability of Agristartups in Value Chain Extension.*" This allowed me to explore how agri-startups are transforming rural value chains and contributing to more efficient and sustainable extension systems. Through literature reviews, stakeholder mapping, and expert interactions, I assessed the role of innovation, digital tools, and entrepreneurship in bridging systemic gaps. This research was not only aligned with my academic goals but also allowed me to contribute meaningfully to a growing area of policy relevance.

Another key moment was supporting a stakeholder mapping exercise under the agri-entrepreneurship framework. This experience highlighted the importance of inter-institutional collaboration and local customization in creating scalable and sustainable interventions. All of this learning was anchored by the mentorship of Dr. Rahalaya. Her thoughtful feedback and keen insights helped me transition from academic writing to structured, research-oriented documentation. Every discussion with her sharpened my thinking and enhanced my skills.



Skills and Knowledge Gained

“From Vision to Voice: How MANAGE Mapped My Purpose in Agricultural Extension”

The MANAGE internship was more than a stepping stone, it directly aligned with my academic and career aspirations. As a postgraduate student in Agricultural Extension Education, I have always envisioned a future where I contribute to policymaking and rural innovation. MANAGE gave structure to that vision, grounding my academic insights in real-world applications. Through various research assignments, especially in digital agriculture and stakeholder engagement, I gained a nuanced understanding of systemic challenges in Indian agriculture. From identifying research gaps to contributing to grassroots solution-building, the experience honed my skills and reaffirmed my passion for working at the intersection of academia, technology, and grassroots empowerment.



It was also a period of personal growth. I became more confident in articulating ideas, more precise in research design, and more agile in adapting to professional expectations. My communication improved, as did my ability to collaborate in multidisciplinary teams. This was not only professional development, it was character building. A crucial aspect of my journey was the mentorship ecosystem. Dr. Saravanan Raj wasn't just overseeing my work, he was a mentor in the truest sense. He encouraged curiosity, welcomed critique, and helped refine my research outputs with constructive feedback. The entire faculty was incredibly supportive and made interns feel not like students, but young professionals with potential.

Among the most impactful parts of my internship was exploring the role of agristartups in digital extension. I conducted literature reviews, interviewed experts, and analyzed how platforms, such as mobile apps, AI tools, and remote sensing, are transforming farmer advisory services. These startups are redefining how knowledge reaches the grassroots, faster, smarter, and more personalized. Under Dr. Saravanan Raj's guidance, I learned to look beyond data and focus on the impact of innovation. He would often say, *"Don't just write. Tell the story of change. Who stops you?"* That mindset transformed my approach, from compiling facts to narrating how startups are driving real change in rural India.

Takeaways and Action Plans



"Roots of Purpose, Wings of Possibility: My Key Takeaways from MANAGE"

If I could distill my experience at MANAGE into one core insight, it would be this: agricultural transformation is not just about inputs and outputs, it's about people, participation, and purpose. The skills and insights I gained will not remain confined to a notebook, they will influence my academic work, future job roles, and field engagements. Whether it's designing participatory extension modules, writing impactful proposals, or facilitating multi-stakeholder collaboration, I now possess a toolkit that blends theory with action.



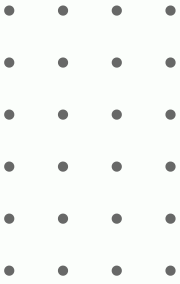
Going forward, I aim to integrate technology-enabled solutions with grassroots-level engagement. The balance of digital reach and human touch, something I learned deeply at MANAGE, will be central to my efforts. Of course, the journey came with challenges. I had to adjust to the fast-paced environment of institutional research, manage tight deadlines, and multitask between reading, analysis, and writing. But through time management, collaboration, and mentor support, I built the resilience and adaptability essential for any professional setting.

Journey with MANAGE



“Beyond the Certificate: MANAGE as My Launchpad to Purpose”

If I had to summarize my MANAGE journey; “It was a bridge between learning and doing, a blend of vision and action, and a space where my academic identity matured into professional clarity. MANAGE didn’t just teach me agriculture, it showed me how to serve it.” From hands-on research and policy immersion to thought-provoking dialogues with experts, every aspect of the program turned theory into impact. The collaborative culture and mentorship empowered me to think critically, work meaningfully, and embrace leadership in agricultural extension.



“With Gratitude, From Growth: The People Who Made MANAGE Unforgettable”

- *Dr. Saravanan Raj*; Your vision and dedication to agricultural extension inspired me beyond words. Your belief in young professionals gave me the courage to dream big and act with purpose.
- *Dr. Raahalya*; Your precision, patience, and mentorship helped shape not just my research, but my mindset.
- *Ms. Divina*; Your constant support and empathy turned pressure into possibility.
- *Mr. Jason*; Your structured thinking and practical approach grounded our creativity and enhanced our work.
- *Ms. Sakshi*; Thank you for being the best teammate. Your leadership in research and editorial skills were invaluable.

To all faculty, staff, and fellow interns; Thank you for building an ecosystem that was not only educational but empowering.

“Internships don’t just prepare you for a job, they prepare you for a purpose.”

And this purpose was made possible because of all of you. Thank you.

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